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South-South cooperation for development

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High-level Committee on South-South Cooperation
Seventeenth session
New York, 22-25 May 2012

Draft report (part I)

Rapporteur: Mr. Joshua **Mugodo** (Kenya)

Contents

Chapter		*Page*
I.	Decisions adopted by the High-level Committee on South-South Cooperation at its seventeenth session	3
II.	High-level plenary segment	4
	A. Opening of the session	4
	B. Introduction of reports on implementation	4
	C. Discussion	4
III.	Thematic discussion: "Promoting socioeconomic transformation through infrastructure development, employment creation, social cohesion and the transfer of appropriate technology using South-South cooperation"	8
IV.	Report of the Working Group	9
V.	Provisional agenda for the eighteenth session of the Committee	10
VI.	Draft report	11
VII.	Closure of the session	12
VIII.	Organizational matters	13
	A. Date and place of the session	13
	B. Attendance	13
	C. Election of officers	13
	D. Adoption of the agenda and organization of work	14

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Annexes

I. List of participants 15

II. List of documents 16

Chapter I

Decisions adopted by the High-level Committee on South-South Cooperation at its seventeenth session

1. The High-level Committee on South-South Cooperation adopted the following decisions at its seventeenth session:

[*To be completed*]

Chapter II
High-level plenary segment

A. Opening of the session

2. At the 1st meeting, on 22 May 2012, the President of the seventeenth session of the Committee, the Permanent Representative of Antigua and Barbuda to the United Nations, opened the session and made an introductory statement.

3. At the same meeting, a statement was made by the President of the General Assembly.

4. Also at the same meeting, a statement was made by the President of the sixteenth session of the Committee.

5. At the same meeting, the Administrator of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) made a statement.

6. Also at the 1st meeting, a statement was made by the Deputy Executive Director of the United Nations Environment Programme.

B. Introduction of reports on implementation

7. At its 1st and ___ meetings, on 22 and ___ May 2012, and at its ____ meetings, on ___ May, the Committee considered items 2, 3 and 4 of its agenda.

8. The Director of the Special Unit for South-South Cooperation introduced the following reports:

(a) Review of progress made in implementing the Buenos Aires Plan of Action, the new directions strategy for South-South cooperation and the Nairobi outcome document of the High-level United Nations Conference on South-South Cooperation (SSC/17/1);

(b) Consideration of reports of the Administrator of the United Nations Development Programme (SSC/17/2);

(c) Note by the Secretary-General on the framework of operational guidelines on United Nations support to South-South and triangular cooperation (SSC/17/3).

C. Discussion

9. With all speakers lauding the value of South-South and triangular cooperation, the tone of the general debate of the Committee was very positive overall. Group spokespersons and representatives of individual States alike noted the importance and the scope of South-South and triangular cooperation. Such cooperation offered "great potential to transform the global development landscape", said one speaker, sounding a theme taken up by many others. "If you want to be incrementally better, be competitive, but if you want to be exponentially better, be cooperative." The spokesman for a group of developed countries noted the "fantastic potential" that developing countries had to offer.

10. Developing countries were unanimous in reiterating that South-South cooperation was an expression of their solidarity and self-reliance, an association of equals and a complement to North-South cooperation for development, not a substitute for it. South-South assistance should not be seen as compensating for declining support from the North for the least developed countries. A number of delegations urged developed countries not to renege on promised aid.

11. A number of developed countries observed that while aid commitments should be kept, there was also a need, in the context of a fast-changing international landscape, to move beyond traditional cooperation to incorporate South-South and triangular cooperation perspectives and development experience. There was also a need to be open to exchanging information on lessons learned from different development cooperation models and to build further understanding of the respective advantages, complementarities and synergies.

12. A corollary to the discussion of the special role and status of South-South and triangular cooperation was the objection raised by several developing countries to references, in the draft framework of operational guidelines on United Nations support to South-South and triangular cooperation, to the Busan Partnership for Effective Development Cooperation, as this was not an outcome document of a United Nations process. As South-South cooperation required "policy space" for developing countries, they could not be "strait-jacketed" in terms of rigid rules and regulations or policy prescriptions, including in the name of aid effectiveness.

13. Some delegates saw no fundamental conflict between North-South cooperation and South-South and triangular cooperation in terms of common objectives; in the current global situation, a new global development partnership was needed, of which all three modalities could be a part. One group of States said that South-South cooperation should be initiated and driven by the least developed countries so as to focus on their own priorities as outlined in the Istanbul Programme of Action.

14. Speakers noted the increasing volume and scope of South-South cooperation in terms of regional integration projects, groundbreaking intraregional initiatives and bilateral, regional and multilateral frameworks. Many speakers noted the important role of South-South cooperation in transferring technology, easing market access, providing development assistance and directing investment flows. The increased connectivity within and among developing countries had opened up new opportunities for South-South cooperation, and several speakers called attention to existing and planned initiatives related to Internet portals for knowledge-sharing.

15. In appeals for the substantial scaling-up and institutionalization of South-South cooperation, it was noted that the global South had effective knowledge-sharing systems, proven development policy options, tested institutional capacity-building solutions and affordable and appropriate technologies in the areas of food security, climate change and HIV/AIDS research. In addition, it was noted that the South was a tremendous source of tested, relevant solutions to development challenges that landlocked developing countries could use.

16. The unprecedented waves of change sweeping the world clearly highlighted the need to scale up South-South cooperation, one delegation stated. The United Nations had an important role in the expansion and mainstreaming of South-South cooperation as a cross-cutting issue at the heart of the development agendas of all its funds, programmes and specialized agencies, both in New York and in the field.

Delegates emphasized the need for long-term vision and global arrangements to optimize the impact of South-South cooperation.

17. While noting the important contribution of the South in maintaining the momentum of global growth amid major economic and financial crises, a number of delegates underlined that even rapidly growing developing countries continued to face serious problems, including persistent poverty, rising inequality and problems related to economic and social exclusion. In fact, the majority of the world's poor lived in middle-income countries that had addressed with a sharp drop in official development assistance through the innovative use of South-South cooperation.

18. A number of speakers noted that negative macroeconomic conditions continued to constrain the development of entire categories of countries, especially the least developed, landlocked and small island developing countries.

19. A major theme of the debate was the key role of the United Nations system in supporting South-South and triangular cooperation, including through regional and subregional bodies. Many speakers welcomed the mainstreaming of South-South cooperation by United Nations agencies, funds and programmes, and several noted that there was considerable room for improvement. In that context, the report of the Joint Inspection Unit on South-South cooperation was a particular topic of interest. Several developing countries regretted that the report of the Unit was not on the agenda of the Committee and urged that it be included.

20. Delegations welcomed the preparation of the draft framework of operational guidelines on United Nations support to South-South and triangular cooperation. Speakers noted that the guidelines were intended for United Nations organizations, not countries, which had to adopt a flexible, practical approach to South-South and triangular cooperation. One spokesperson for a group of developed countries saw the guidelines as a practical follow-up to the 2009 Nairobi High-level United Nations Conference on South-South Cooperation.

21. Another particular focus of interest was the role and the capacity of the Special Unit for South-South Cooperation. Speakers from developing countries were strongly in support of strengthening the Special Unit, expanding its mandate and increasing its resources. One delegate noted that the core resources of the Special Unit had actually declined even as the demands on it had grown in recent years. The spokesperson for a group of developed countries said the Special Unit had successfully created a space where United Nations actors, Member States, the private sector and non-governmental development actors could forge inclusive partnerships for effective development. The positioning, functions and resources of the Special Unit needed to be strengthened so as to ensure that it had the capacity to track, analyse and study the dynamic process of South-South cooperation and to establish and implement policy measures. This was necessary in order to continuously strengthen the monitoring and implementation of the Buenos Aires Plan of Action and the Nairobi outcome document. Speakers noted that intergovernmental consultations on strengthening the Special Unit were necessary but had not commenced.

22. A number of delegations noted that South-South and triangular cooperation included a diverse range of participants: in addition to Governments, the most prominent players were the private sector, civil society and academic institutions. This was seen as a new global development partnership that included all

stakeholders, both traditional and new. In that context, policy and operational coordination were important to ensure the optimal use of resources.

23. The positive role of South-South and triangular cooperation in improving transport and communications infrastructure was a theme stressed by a number of speakers, especially those from landlocked countries. One delegation speaking for a group of developing countries cited a World Bank study on the costs of doing business that showed the disproportionately high costs imposed on the trade of landlocked countries. It called for work towards an "investment preference regime" of tax breaks and guarantees of credit and risk to encourage the corporations from the South to invest in infrastructure and productive capacity-building in landlocked developing countries.

Chapter III

Thematic discussion: "Promoting socioeconomic transformation through infrastructure development, employment creation, social cohesion and the transfer of appropriate technology using South-South cooperation"

24. The Committee considered item 5 of its agenda at its ___ meeting, on ___ May 2012.

[*To be completed*]

Chapter IV
Report of the Working Group

25. At its ___ meeting, on 25 May 2012, the Committee considered item 6 of its agenda.

26. The Chair-cum-Rapporteur of the Working Group and Vice-President of the Committee introduced the report of the Working Group.

27. The Committee adopted the report of the Working Group.

Chapter V

Provisional agenda for the eighteenth session of the Committee

28. At its ___ meeting, on ___ May 2012, the Committee considered items ____ of its agenda.

29. At the same meeting, the Committee approved the provisional agenda for its eighteenth session (see chap. I, decision 17/___).

30. By the same decision, the Committee authorized its President to consult with the representatives of Member States on the thematic discussion for the eighteenth session and to communicate the decision taken on the basis of those consultations to Member States in advance of the eighteenth session in order to enable delegates to take appropriate preparatory actions.

Chapter VI
Draft report

31. At its ___ meeting, on 25 May 2012, the Committee considered item ___ of its agenda.

32. The Rapporteur, Joshua Mugodo (Kenya), introduced the draft report of the Committee.

33. The Committee adopted the draft report and entrusted the Rapporteur with its completion.

Chapter VII
Closure of the session

34. At the ___ meeting, on 25 May 2012, [*to be completed*].

35. At the same meeting, closing statements were made by [*to be completed*].

Chapter VIII
Organizational matters

A. Date and place of the session

36. The High-level Committee on South-South Cooperation held its seventeenth session at United Nations Headquarters from 22 to 25 May 2012. The Committee held ___ meetings (1st to ___). It also held an organizational meeting on 3 May 2012.

37. The establishment, background, history, chronology and reports of previous sessions of the Committee are contained in the reports of the Committee to the General Assembly.[1]

38. In accordance with paragraph 3 of General Assembly resolution 35/202, the session was convened by the Administrator of UNDP under the usual procedural arrangements.

B. Attendance

39. The seventeenth session of the Committee was attended by representatives of States Members of the United Nations participating in UNDP. Also attending were [*to be completed*]. The list of participants is contained in annex I to the present report.

C. Election of officers

40. The following officers were elected by acclamation:

President:
John W. Ashe (Antigua and Barbuda)

Vice-Presidents:
Le Hoai Trung (Viet Nam)
Alison Helena Chartres (Australia)
Attila Zimonyi (Hungary)

Rapporteur:
Joshua Mugodo (Kenya)

[1] *Official Records of the General Assembly, Thirty-fifth Session, Supplement No. 39* and corrigendum (A/35/39 and Corr.1); ibid., *Thirty-sixth Session, Supplement No. 39* (A/36/39); ibid., *Thirty-eighth Session, Supplement No. 39* (A/38/39); ibid., *Fortieth Session, Supplement No. 39* (A/40/39); ibid., *Forty-second Session, Supplement No. 39* (A/42/39); ibid., *Forty-fourth Session, Supplement No. 39* (A/44/39); ibid., *Forty-sixth Session, Supplement No. 39* (A/46/39); ibid., *Forty-eighth Session, Supplement No. 39* (A/48/39); ibid., *Fiftieth Session, Supplement No. 39* (A/50/39); ibid., *Fifty-second Session, Supplement No. 39* (A/52/39); ibid., *Fifty-fourth Session, Supplement No. 39* (A/54/39); ibid., *Fifty-sixth Session, Supplement No. 39* (A/56/39); ibid., *Fifty-eighth Session, Supplement No. 39* (A/58/39); ibid., *Sixtieth Session, Supplement No. 39* (A/60/39); ibid., *Sixty-second Session, Supplement No. 39* (A/62/39); and ibid., *Sixty-fifth Session, Supplement No. 39* (A/65/39).

41. The Committee approved the President's recommendation that Vice-President Alison Helena Chartres (Australia) serve as Chair of the Working Group. It was subsequently agreed that the Chair should also serve as Rapporteur of the Working Group.

D. Adoption of the agenda and organization of work

42. The Committee held its organizational meeting in New York on 3 May 2012 to elect the Bureau of the seventeenth session and to adopt the provisional agenda and programme of work.

43. The Committee adopted the provisional annotated agenda (SSC/17/L.2) and organization of work (SSC/17/L.3) for its seventeenth session. A general debate was held in the plenary from 22 to ___ May 2012 on items 2, 3 and 4. The Working Group, scheduled to begin its work on 24 May 2012, was assigned agenda items 2, 3 and 4 for substantive discussion and charged with making recommendations to the Committee. The list of documents before the Committee at its seventeenth session is contained in annex II to the present report.

Annex I

List of participants

States Members of the United Nations or States participating in the United Nations Development Programme

[*To be completed*]

United Nations bodies, funds and programmes

[*To be completed*]

Specialized agencies

[*To be completed*]

Intergovernmental organizations

[*To be completed*]

Non-governmental and other organizations invited to participate as observers

[*To be completed*]

Individuals invited to participate as keynote speakers and/or panellists

[*To be completed*]

Annex II

List of documents

Provisional annotated agenda, including list of documents (SSC/17/L.2)

Note by the Administrator on the adoption of the agenda and organization of work (SSC/17/L.3)

Review of progress made in implementing the Buenos Aires Plan of Action, the new directions strategy for South-South cooperation and the Nairobi outcome document of the High-level United Nations Conference on South-South Cooperation (SSC/17/1)

Consideration of reports of the Administrator of the United Nations Development Programme (SSC/17/2)

Note by the Secretary-General on the framework of operational guidelines on United Nations support to South-South and triangular cooperation (SSC/17/3)

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Contents

Chapter		*Page*
I.	Decisions adopted by the High-level Committee on South-South Cooperation at its seventeenth session	3
II.	High-level plenary segment	4
	A. Opening of the session	4
	B. Introduction of reports on implementation	4
	C. Discussion	4
III.	Thematic discussion: "Promoting socioeconomic transformation through infrastructure development, employment creation, social cohesion and the transfer of appropriate technology using South-South cooperation"	9
IV.	Report of the Working Group	12
V.	Provisional agenda for the eighteenth session of the Committee	13
VI.	Draft report	14
VII.	Closure of the session	15
VIII.	Organizational matters	16
	A. Date and place of the session	16
	B. Attendance	16
	C. Election of officers	16
	D. Adoption of the agenda and organization of work	17

12-35100 (E) 300512

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Annexes

I. List of participants 18

II. List of documents 20

Chapter I

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Chapter II
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A. Opening of the session

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3. At the same meeting, a statement was made by the President of the General Assembly.

4. Also at the same meeting, a statement was made by the President of the sixteenth session of the Committee.

5. At the same meeting, the Administrator of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) made a statement.

6. Also at the 1st meeting, a statement was made by the Deputy Executive Director of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP).

B. Introduction of reports on implementation

7. At its 1st and ___ meetings, on 22 and ___ May 2012, and at its ___ meetings, on ___ May, the Committee considered items 2, 3 and 4 of its agenda.

8. The Director of the Special Unit for South-South Cooperation introduced the following reports:

(a) Review of progress made in implementing the Buenos Aires Plan of Action, the new directions strategy for South-South cooperation and the Nairobi outcome document of the High-level United Nations Conference on South-South Cooperation (SSC/17/1);

(b) Consideration of reports of the Administrator of the United Nations Development Programme (SSC/17/2);

(c) Note by the Secretary-General on the framework of operational guidelines on United Nations support to South-South and triangular cooperation (SSC/17/3).

C. Discussion

9. With all speakers lauding the value of South-South and triangular cooperation, the tone of the general debate of the Committee was very positive overall. Group representatives and individual States alike noted the growing importance and scope of South-South and triangular cooperation in the achievement of development goals, especially the Millennium Development Goals. Many speakers sounded the theme that the modality offered great potential to transform the global development landscape.

10. Developing countries were unanimous in reaffirming their political commitment to and strong support for South-South cooperation. They saw it as a complement to North-South cooperation for development, not its substitute, and as their collective endeavour based on the principle of solidarity and premises, conditions and objectives specific to the historical and political context of developing countries and to their needs and expectations. As such, South-South cooperation deserved its own separate and independent promotion, as reaffirmed in the Nairobi outcome document.

11. To ensure adequate support for South-South cooperation, delegations expressed the need for the strengthening of current institutional mechanisms. It was noted that the Nairobi outcome document and General Assembly resolutions repeatedly requested the Secretary-General, in consultation with Member States, to take concrete measures to further strengthen the Special Unit for South-South Cooperation as a separate entity and focal point for cooperation. It was noted that the core resources of the Special Unit had actually declined even as the demands on it had grown in recent years. An intergovernmental organization representing a group of States noted that it had benefited from the services and support of the Special Unit. At the same time, it had observed with interest and concern that, with the weight of expectations being placed on the Special Unit and its current mandates, including those from the General Assembly, its capacity needed to be strengthened.

12. The Special Unit was seen as having successfully created a space where United Nations actors, Member States, the private sector and non-governmental development actors could forge inclusive partnerships for effective development. The Special Unit's positioning, functions and resources were seen as in need of strengthening to ensure its capacity to track, analyse and study the dynamic process of South-South cooperation, and to lay down and implement policy measures. One delegation indicated "flexibility" on the issue of relocating the Special Unit within the United Nations system. Some delegations urged the continuous strengthening of the monitoring and implementation of the Buenos Aires Plan of Action and the Nairobi outcome document. Speakers noted that intergovernmental consultations on strengthening the Special Unit were necessary but had not commenced.

13. Delegations welcomed the preparation of the draft framework of operational guidelines on United Nations support to South-South and triangular cooperation. Speakers noted, however, that the guidelines were meant for United Nations organizations, not for countries, which had to adopt a flexible, practical approach to South-South and triangular cooperation. A group of countries saw the guidelines as a practical tool for follow-up to the 2009 Nairobi High-level United Nations Conference on South-South Cooperation.

14. Citing the report of the Joint Inspection Unit on South-South cooperation, developing countries collectively called on United Nations organizations, specialized agencies, funds and programmes, including regional commissions, to establish or strengthen existing institutional and financial arrangements within their mandates and respective areas of competence under the overall policy guidance of the Committee and relevant General Assembly resolutions. In that regard, it was proposed that the Committee submit the operational guidelines for consideration during the quadrennial comprehensive policy review scheduled for November 2012.

15. Ancillary to the discussion of the special role and status of South-South and triangular cooperation was the objection raised by several developing countries to references, made in the draft framework of operational guidelines on United Nations support to South-South and triangular cooperation, to the "Busan Partnership for Effective Development Cooperation", as that was not an outcome document of a United Nations process. As South-South cooperation required policy space for developing countries, they could not be "straitjacketed" in terms of rigid rules and regulations or policy prescriptions, including in the name of aid effectiveness. It was noted that the effectiveness of aid had to be judged by the results in each case, and that no across-the-board standard would be relevant. Furthermore, there was a paradigm difference between North-South and South-South assistance that no common approach could bridge.

16. There was general agreement that South-South cooperation should not be seen as compensating for declining support from the North for the least developed countries. A number of delegations urged developed countries not to renege on promised aid.

17. A number of developed countries observed that while aid commitments should be fulfilled as pledged, there was also a need, in the context of a fast-changing international landscape, to move beyond the traditional cooperation to incorporate South-South and triangular cooperation perspectives and development experience. There was also a need to be open to the exchange of information on lessons learned from different development cooperation models, and to build further understanding of the respective advantages, complementarities and synergies.

18. A group of developed countries expressed the view that the Fourth High-level Forum on Aid Effectiveness, held in Busan, Republic of Korea, had invoked principles familiar to all development actors, including the Buenos Aires Plan of Action (1978) and the Nairobi outcome document (2009), and thus should guide all forms of development partnership. The aim was to make development, not just aid, effective. The Busan Forum had recognized that the nature, modalities and responsibilities of South-South cooperation differed from those that applied to North-South cooperation, and that the principles, commitments and actions agreed in the Busan outcome document should be the reference for South-South partners on a voluntary basis.

19. Noting that developing countries had emerged as major economic actors; that trade, investment, remittances and philanthropic and other private sector resources had dwarfed official development assistance; and that three of the top five trading partners of least developed countries were other developing countries, a delegation argued that traditional differences between donor and recipient countries were becoming less relevant. A full third of foreign direct investment now originated in developing countries. A delegation observed that in this new situation, a set of international standards applicable to all forms of assistance was essential.

20. Some delegates saw no fundamental conflict between North-South and South-South and triangular cooperation in terms of common objectives; they said that a new global development partnership encompassing all three modalities was needed.

21. Speakers noted the increasing volume and scope of South-South cooperation in terms of regional integration projects, groundbreaking intraregional initiatives and bilateral, regional and multilateral frameworks. Many speakers noted the important

role of South-South cooperation in technology transfer, easing market access, providing development assistance and directing investment flows. The increased connectivity within and among developing countries had opened up new opportunities for South-South cooperation, and several speakers called attention to existing and planned initiatives related to Internet portals for knowledge-sharing.

22. In calls for the substantial scaling-up and institutionalization of South-South cooperation, it was noted that the global South had effective knowledge-sharing systems, proven development policy options, tested institutional capacity-building solutions and affordable and appropriate technologies in the areas of food security, climate change and HIV/AIDS research. In addition, it was noted that the South was a tremendous source of tested, relevant solutions to development challenges that landlocked developing countries could use. There was a need for South-South cooperation focused on the priority needs of least developed countries as outlined in the Istanbul Programme of Action. A number of speakers noted that negative macroeconomic conditions continued to constrain the development of entire categories of countries, especially the least developed, landlocked and small island developing countries. A number of speakers stressed that the generation of productive capacities and job creation were among the most important priorities of South-South and triangular cooperation.

23. The unprecedented waves of change sweeping the world clearly underlined the need to scale up South-South cooperation. The United Nations had an important role in the expansion and mainstreaming of South-South cooperation as a cross-cutting issue at the heart of the development agendas of all its funds, programmes and specialized agencies, both in New York and in the field. Delegates emphasized the need for long-term vision and global arrangements to optimize the impact of South-South cooperation.

24. While noting the important contribution of the South in maintaining the momentum of global growth amid major economic and financial crises, a number of delegates underlined that even rapidly growing developing countries continued to face serious problems, including persistent poverty, rising inequality and problems of economic and social exclusion. In fact, the majority of the world's poor lived in middle-income countries, which had dealt with a sharp drop in official development assistance through the innovative use of South-South cooperation.

25. A major theme of the debate was the key role of the United Nations system in supporting South-South and triangular cooperation, including through regional and subregional bodies. Many speakers welcomed the mainstreaming of South-South cooperation by United Nations agencies, funds and programmes, and a number of them noted that there was considerable room for improvement. In that context, the report of the Joint Inspection Unit on South-South cooperation was an especial topic of interest. Several delegations regretted that the Unit's report on South-South cooperation was not on the official agenda of the Committee and urged its inclusion. One delegation said that in implementing the Unit's recommendations, United Nations agencies, funds and programmes should be guided by the priorities set by their own governing bodies; it encouraged the UNDP Administrator to consult with the Programme's Executive Board on the matter as it shaped the next strategic plan and integrated budget.

26. A number of delegations noted that South-South and triangular cooperation included a diverse range of participants: in addition to Governments, the most prominent players were the private sector, civil society and academic institutions. This was seen as a new global development partnership, which included all stakeholders, both traditional and new. In that context, policy and operational coordination were important to ensure the optimal use of resources.

27. It was noted that developing countries were increasingly competitive internationally, both in production and investment. The private sector in the South was beginning to play an active role beyond traditional inter-State development partnerships. Many multilateral development institutions not associated with the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development had also become engaged through different channels, such as direct fund transfers and joint partnerships with State and non-State stakeholders.

28. The positive role of South-South and triangular cooperation in improving transport and communications infrastructure was a theme stressed by a number of speakers, especially those from landlocked countries. A delegation speaking for a group of developing countries cited a World Bank study on the costs of doing business that showed the disproportionately high costs imposed on the trade of landlocked countries. It called for work towards an investment preference regime of tax breaks and guarantees of credit and risk to encourage corporations from the South to invest in infrastructure and productive capacity-building in landlocked developing countries.

29. One delegation noted a few points of difference with the reports before the Committee; these were noted by the secretariat.

30. Twelve specialized agencies and programmes participated in the general debate, presenting a wide diversity of South-South activities, initiatives and exchange mechanisms. Some noted the creation of special arrangements and strategies for the mainstreaming of South-South and triangular cooperation, and all described operational activities reflecting the new importance attached to the modality. It was noted that the Committee meeting was opportune for considering the role of South-South cooperation and triangular cooperation in dealing with the issues pertaining to sustainable development to be considered at the forthcoming United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development, to be held in June 2012.

Chapter III

Thematic discussion: "Promoting socioeconomic transformation through infrastructure development, employment creation, social cohesion and the transfer of appropriate technology using South-South cooperation"

31. The Committee considered item 5 of its agenda at its 4th meeting, on 23 May 2012.

32. The Ambassador of Nepal, who served as the moderator of the thematic discussion, introduced the keynote speaker and the five panel members.[1]

33. The thematic debate of the Committee, held on 23 May, explored the role of South-South and triangular cooperation in promoting socioeconomic transformation through infrastructure development, employment creation, social cohesion and the transfer of appropriate technology. Inaugurating the discussions, the moderator noted that developing countries accounted for one third of world gross domestic product, a share that was expected to rise to 50 per cent by 2015. The question at issue was how South-South and triangular cooperation could leverage that strong growth to bring about a general socioeconomic transformation of the South.

34. Each of the five experts who made a presentation during the general discussion addressed a different aspect of that issue.

Keynote speech

35. In the keynote speech, the Deputy Executive Director of UNEP stressed the importance of South-South cooperation policies and programmes in dealing with environmental change. Failure to address ecological challenges would have an impact on the sustainability of all development, including that achieved through South-South cooperation. In 2010, more than 90 per cent of natural disasters that had caused social displacements — floods, droughts and storms — had been related to climate. The development of environmental infrastructure and capacity to deal with ecological changes would create decent jobs and increase social cohesion, whereas failure to do so could have very negative results. Accelerating environmental change, including climate change, would determine the development paths of individual nations; the efficacy of international cooperation, especially South-South cooperation, in mustering collective responses to common challenges was of critical importance. Developing countries had much to learn from one another and South-South cooperation could build the capacity required for the necessary transformations and adaptations. To facilitate such learning, UNEP had designed a web portal, the South-South Cooperation Exchange Mechanism. The Deputy Executive Director had officially launched the Mechanism, which was designed to promote information exchange, develop networks of practitioners and serve as a clearing house for news, event reports, case studies, blogs and other tools supportive of South-South cooperation on environmental matters.

[1] The views expressed by the panellists are not necessarily those of the High-level Committee on South-South Cooperation.

First presentation

36. The presenter of the theme "The role of export-import banks in fostering South-South cooperation through infrastructure development and its contribution to socioeconomic development" described how risk mitigation and financing for trade fostered vital South-South linkages that had important economic, technical and service impacts. Among the results of his Bank's activities were improved food grain production, rural electrification and infrastructure development that involved Indian companies in bringing socioeconomic change and growth to other developing countries. In facilitating trade and "cluster development" in Africa, Asia and Latin America and the Caribbean, the Bank had transferred agricultural expertise and industrial technology, helped the institutional development of microfinance services, fostered the growth of cooperatives and developed the competitiveness of small and medium-sized enterprises.

Second presentation

37. The presenter of the theme "The role that South-South cooperation plays in infrastructure development to foster socioeconomic transformation in Asia" stated that infrastructure development was booming in Asia and that much of it was supported by South-South cooperation. However, if this was to be translated into social transformation and cohesion, several criteria had to be met. Environmental and social costs had to be studied and monitored; the distribution of costs and benefits, both locally and among the Southern partners involved, should be equitable; and projects had to be cost-effective over the long term. Growing inequality in the distribution of infrastructure was a problem in Asia and had to be addressed. Even after those issues were addressed, the overall outcome in terms of social impact was hard to predict, for the interrelations in question were complex and involved a multiplicity of actors. However, South-South cooperation for infrastructure development was a growth sector, because the benefits were usually shared by partners, especially when, as was generally true in Asia, there were cultural bonds across national borders.

Third presentation

38. The presenter of the theme "Employment-intensive investment: a credible instrument for employment creation through infrastructure development" stated that only about one third of countries set targets for job creation at the planning stage. As the creation of infrastructure was a capital-intensive process, there was a tendency to take decisions within small groups. Jobless growth was a frequent result of such development. To avoid that, developers had to take into account the challenges and multipliers of beneficial impacts, engage in a transparent and inclusive consultative process, and involve local actors in planning, building, maintaining and owning their projects. This would maximize backward and forward linkages, strengthen local markets and combat inequality. Studies had shown that the benefits of using local resources were dramatic. A study conducted in Madagascar comparing building projects with similar outputs had found that a project using local resources had cost 45 per cent less and had generated five times more income for workers than one using imported modular construction elements. In South-South cooperation projects, it was important to have employment impact assessments prepared bilaterally and at the regional level with the participation of interministerial bodies and various stakeholders. A sectoral approach would enable countries to increase

employment and make greater use of local skilled and unskilled labour. Regional forums could facilitate South-South cooperation, as could other knowledge-sharing mechanisms, such as regional seminars, university networks, and national technical colleges linked for the exchange of curricula and staff.

Fourth presentation

39. The presenter of the theme "How developing countries can better support each other to gain greater access to essential medicine through South-South cooperation" stated that there was considerable anecdotal evidence of South-South cooperation in the health sector, but there had been little effort to map what was happening overall. Studies by the Research and Information System for Developing Countries had found that just four major developing countries were contributing some $200 million per year to health cooperation. One country had a major role in facilitating the development of health systems, including pharmaceutical industries. Two developing countries had programmes deploying doctors to other countries. A number of countries provided medical training. There appeared to be relatively strong South-South collaboration in African health delivery, but systematic research on its scale was lacking. In the area of biotechnology, developing country authors had contributed 8.2 per cent of the more than 640,000 papers published worldwide between 1994 and 2005. Only about 3 per cent of the papers had South-South co-authors, whereas 40 per cent were North-North co-authored. South-South cooperation in research lowered drug costs, as evidenced by treatments for meningitis and cholera. In moving to promote South-South cooperation in the medical field, the challenge was how to link market incentives with actual research and development needs.

General discussion

40. The general discussion that followed engaged delegates in questions and answers about how the Committee could encourage and facilitate greater integration of South-South cooperation in infrastructure development with national plans; the extent of medical South-South cooperation; the conditionalities governing the operations of the Export-Import Bank of India; and how best to engage developed countries in triangular cooperation infrastructure development.

41. The expert panellists underlined the importance of closing the institutional, information and accountability gaps in dealing with inefficiencies caused by the scattering of authority and accountability. Unless the host country itself moved to overcome the existing obstacles, it would be difficult to address the issue.

42. With regard to the conditionality governing export-import financing, the expert said that market demand and bilateral arrangements were critical factors.

43. One expert said there was a convergence of views among developed and developing countries on the need for greater investment in infrastructure development. In eliciting greater support from developed countries in the health sector, developing countries should identify their priorities and bring together various stakeholders. Developing country diasporas could be a key multiplier of effectiveness.

Chapter IV
Report of the Working Group

44. At its ___ meeting, on 25 May 2012, the Committee considered item 6 of its agenda.

45. The Chair-cum-Rapporteur of the Working Group and Vice-President of the Committee introduced the report of the Working Group.

46. The Committee adopted the report of the Working Group.

Chapter V

Provisional agenda for the eighteenth session of the Committee

47. At its ___ meeting, on ___ May 2012, the Committee considered items ____ of its agenda.

48. At the same meeting, the Committee approved the provisional agenda for its eighteenth session (see chap. I, decision 17/___).

49. By the same decision, the Committee authorized its President to consult with the representatives of Member States on the thematic discussion for the eighteenth session and to communicate the decision taken on the basis of those consultations to Member States in advance of the eighteenth session in order to enable delegates to take appropriate preparatory actions.

Chapter VI
Draft report

50. At its ___ meeting, on 25 May 2012, the Committee considered item ___ of its agenda.

51. The Rapporteur, Joshua Mugodo (Kenya), introduced the draft report of the Committee.

52. The Committee adopted the draft report and entrusted the Rapporteur with its completion.

Chapter VII
Closure of the session

53. At the ___ meeting, on 25 May 2012 [*to be completed*].

54. At the same meeting, closing statements were made by [*to be completed*].

Chapter VIII
Organizational matters

A. Date and place of the session

55. The High-level Committee on South-South Cooperation held its seventeenth session at United Nations Headquarters from 22 to 25 May 2012. The Committee held ___ meetings (1st to ___). It also held an organizational meeting on 3 May 2012.

56. The establishment, background, history, chronology and reports of previous sessions of the Committee are contained in the reports of the Committee to the General Assembly.[2]

57. In accordance with paragraph 3 of General Assembly resolution 35/202, the session was convened by the Administrator of UNDP under the usual procedural arrangements.

B. Attendance

58. The seventeenth session of the Committee was attended by representatives of States Members of the United Nations participating in UNDP. Also attending were [*to be completed*]. The list of participants is contained in annex I to the present report.

C. Election of officers

59. The following officers were elected by acclamation:

President:
John W. Ashe (Antigua and Barbuda)

Vice-Presidents:
Le Hoai Trung (Viet Nam)
Alison Helena Chartres (Australia)
Attila Zimonyi (Hungary)

Rapporteur:
Joshua Mugodo (Kenya)

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[2] *Official Records of the General Assembly, Thirty-fifth Session, Supplement No. 39* and corrigendum (A/35/39 and Corr.1); ibid., *Thirty-sixth Session, Supplement No. 39* (A/36/39); ibid., *Thirty-eighth Session, Supplement No. 39* (A/38/39); ibid., *Fortieth Session, Supplement No. 39* (A/40/39); ibid., *Forty-second Session, Supplement No. 39* (A/42/39); ibid., *Forty-fourth Session, Supplement No. 39* (A/44/39); ibid., *Forty-sixth Session, Supplement No. 39* (A/46/39); ibid., *Forty-eighth Session, Supplement No. 39* (A/48/39); ibid., *Fiftieth Session, Supplement No. 39* (A/50/39); ibid., *Fifty-second Session, Supplement No. 39* (A/52/39); ibid., *Fifty-fourth Session, Supplement No. 39* (A/54/39); ibid., *Fifty-sixth Session, Supplement No. 39* (A/56/39); ibid., *Fifty-eighth Session, Supplement No. 39* (A/58/39); ibid., *Sixtieth Session, Supplement No. 39* (A/60/39); ibid., *Sixty-second Session, Supplement No. 39* (A/62/39); and ibid., *Sixty-fifth Session, Supplement No. 39* (A/65/39).

60. The Committee approved the President's recommendation that Vice-President Alison Helena Chartres (Australia) serve as Chair of the Working Group. It was subsequently agreed that the Chair should also serve as Rapporteur of the Working Group.

D. Adoption of the agenda and organization of work

61. The Committee held its organizational meeting in New York on 3 May 2012 to elect the Bureau of the seventeenth session and to adopt the provisional agenda and programme of work.

62. The Committee adopted the provisional annotated agenda (SSC/17/L.2) and organization of work (SSC/17/L.3) for its seventeenth session. A general debate was held in the plenary from 22 to ___ May 2012 on items 2, 3 and 4. The Working Group, scheduled to begin its work on 24 May 2012, was assigned agenda items 2, 3 and 4 for substantive discussion and charged with making recommendations to the Committee. The list of documents before the Committee at its seventeenth session is contained in annex II to the present report.

Annex I

List of participants

States Members of the United Nations or States participating in the United Nations Development Programme

Algeria, Angola, Antigua and Barbuda, Australia, Bangladesh, Barbados, Belgium, Benin, Bolivia (Plurinational State of), Bosnia and Herzegovina, Botswana, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cambodia, Canada, Cape Verde, Chad, Chile, China, Colombia, Costa Rica, Côte d'Ivoire, Cuba, Czech Republic, Djibouti, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Eritrea, France, Gabon, Germany, Ghana, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Guyana, Honduras, India, Indonesia, Iraq, Israel, Italy, Japan, Jordan, Kenya, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Lesotho, Liberia, Malaysia, Mali, Malta, Mauritania, Mexico, Morocco, Nepal, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Niger, Nigeria, Norway, Pakistan, Peru, Portugal, Republic of Korea, Romania, Russian Federation, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Samoa, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Singapore, Slovenia, South Africa, Spain, Sri Lanka, Suriname, Switzerland, Syrian Arab Republic, Thailand, Turkey, Uganda, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America, Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of), Viet Nam, Zimbabwe

Non-Member State having received a standing invitation to participate as observer in the sessions and the work of the General Assembly and maintaining a Permanent Observer Mission at Headquarters

Holy See

United Nations bodies, funds and programmes

International Trade Centre, United Nations Children's Fund, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Development Operations Coordination Office, United Nations Development Programme, United Nations Environment Programme, United Nations Human Settlements Programme, United Nations System Staff College, United Nations Volunteers, World Tourism Organization

Specialized agencies

International Labour Organization; International Monetary Fund; United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization; United Nations Industrial Development Organization; World Bank Institute; World Health Organization; World Intellectual Property Organization

Intergovernmental organizations

Commonwealth, European Union, Organization of Islamic Cooperation, Partners in Population and Development

Non-governmental and other entities invited to participate as observers

Asian Development Bank; Development Cooperation Directorate, Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development; Export-Import Bank of India; Inter-American Cooperation Network; Palestine; Princeton University; Research and Information System for Developing Countries

Individuals invited to participate as keynote speakers and/or panellists

Sachin Chaturvedi (Senior Fellow, Research and Information System for Developing Countries)

Amina Mohamed (Deputy Executive Director, United Nations Environment Programme)

Rita Nangia (Senior Adviser, Asian Development Bank)

T. D. Sivakumar (Resident Representative (Americas), Export-Import Bank of India)

Annex II

List of documents

Provisional annotated agenda, including list of documents (SSC/17/L.2)

Note by the Administrator on the adoption of the agenda and organization of work (SSC/17/L.3)

Review of progress made in implementing the Buenos Aires Plan of Action, the new directions strategy for South-South cooperation and the Nairobi outcome document of the High-level United Nations Conference on South-South Cooperation (SSC/17/1)

Consideration of reports of the Administrator of the United Nations Development Programme (SSC/17/2)

Note by the Secretary-General on the framework of operational guidelines on United Nations support to South-South and triangular cooperation (SSC/17/3)

Note by the Secretary-General on South-South and triangular cooperation in the United Nations system (A/66/717 and Add.1)